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The volume is especially significant in at least three respects. In the first place it appears as a great relief from the usual type of Arctic exploration, the object having been to learn something definite about the life, religious beliefs, customs and legends of a little known race. Secondly, the author, as the son of a Danish missionary to Greenland, speaking the Eskimo language from boyhood and with a touch of Eskimo blood in his own veins, was peculiarly fitted for a sympathetic understanding of these people. Finally, the Polar Eskimos are disappearing so rapidly before the ravages of disease and the hardships of nature, that this first research into their folklore will probably be the last. It is particularly fortunate, therefore, that the records have been utilized before it was too late.

The most attractive part of the work is in the real folklore of the Polar Eskimos especially in their fables and legends regarding animals, the heavenly bodies, traveling adventures and meetings with strange tribes. In this same class are to be included also the elaborate system of religious beliefs, the various effects of different acts on the doer and the preventive measures which are imposed on individuals. It is interesting to trace here ideas found among other primitive peoples, such as the idea of a flood, the ascent of the dead to become luminous heavenly bodies, the passage of souls to animals in certain cases, and the customs associated with childbirth. The book is not only a valuable contribution to the study of primitive folklore, but is at the same time highly interesting as a portrayal of Polar life.

The entire book is fascinating reading, and is superbly illustrated with colored prints and charming sketches, the work of Count Harald Moltke, who accompanied the author.

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**Ray, P. Orman.** *The Repeal of the Missouri Compromise.* Pp. 375. Price, \$3.50. Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark Company, 1909.

Frontier conditions and influences are fascinating phases of American history which have afforded explanations for many of the important developments of our national life. Professor Ray now uses them to correct what he believes to be a wrong interpretation both of the causes of the repeal of the Missouri Compromise and of the authorship of the bill. Historians have placed various interpretations upon the motives of Senator Douglas—the reputed author of the Kansas-Nebraska bill, but they have been almost unanimous in ascribing the authorship of the measure to him and holding that he believed it would be the means of placing him in the Presidency. Douglas himself was anxious to claim the credit. Professor Ray has gathered a surprising array of facts to show that the real cause was the peculiar conditions existing in Missouri politics in the decade 1844-54. The real originator of the measure he insists was the Senator from that state, David R. Atchison. He proves that the project was repeatedly

advocated by Atchison in speeches in Missouri and that Douglas introduced the bill only after it had been repeatedly urged upon him—that he became connected with the movement only at a very late period though he claimed to have advocated it for “eight long years.”

The book emphasizes two facts as to our writing of American history—that there are still important factors shaping our national legislation which have not been given their proper prominence—though this is less true of the frontier than of some other influences; and that state politics and sectionalism are influences which it is only too easy to overlook or underestimate.

The author has spared no effort to get together all the available material, and fortifies his statements with abundant footnote references to the authorities on which he relies. The latter part of the book presents the chief documents on the subject, a selected bibliography and an excellent index.

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**Schurz, Carl.** *The Reminiscences Of.* 3 vols. Pp. xi, 1333. Price, \$6.00. New York: Doubleday, Page & Co., 1909.

Few men meet such varied and interesting experiences as were the fortune of Carl Schurz, and few men who attempt autobiography are masters of so pleasing a style. The three volumes in which the tale of this long life is told keep the attention of the reader as few novels do. The first treats the author's youth, the second the prime of life, the third, the period during which Mr. Schurz stood prominent as the leader of independents in national politics and as a political sage. The latter part of this volume was written by Mr. Frederick Bancroft and Prof. W. A. Dunning after Mr. Schurz's death. This portion covers the last three decades of the nineteenth century during which occurred the greater part of Mr. Schurz's political activity. The authors are to be complimented upon the sympathetic and thorough presentation of Mr. Schurz's public service but one cannot but regret that this, the most interesting period of his life, could not have been described by the great statesman himself.

Volume one is chiefly valuable to the American for its literary charm and the intimate touch it gives with a civilization now rapidly disappearing. The feudal relations of the German peasant classes with their lords, the simple home life and curious village customs are described with a detail and wealth of illustration which makes the book as vivid as a spoken narrative. Especially interesting are the descriptions of student days in the German universities and the thrilling times of the Revolution of 1848, connection with which caused the author's abrupt departure for America. With this portion of the first volume begins the real contribution which the volumes make to history. The student of the struggles for freer governments will find in these pages a fascinating picture of the trials of the leaders of a cause lost at that time, but the principles of which were to triumph a generation later.